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light-hearted workmen, all of them worthy of the title of masters! Any one sufficiently far-sighted to peer into the future, might doubtless foresee the time when the church ceasing to overflow with an excess of wealth, society will resolve itself into paganism, and find it difficult to nourish its old men, instruct its orphans and preserve in material order its angry crowds of indolent workmen, for there would then no longer remain to it the divine yoke of the Evangelist or the infernal yoke of slavery. But what is all this to me! What is society to me, provided its ruin contributes one instant of repose to the pleasure of my eye and to the desires of my heart. With the wealth that would nourish for a century successively a hundred families of the honest city of Laon, I can maintain myself for my whole life as the Cræsus of my age. Mine then be it!"

"Brother," exclaimed at this instant a mild and feeble voice, "you have kindly passed the night by the side of an old man, a stranger and one unknown to you—may God grant you his blessing!"

Jacobus, surprised in the midst of his feverish soliloquy, remained a few moments without a response to the pious gratitude of Anselm.

"Venerable Father," said he, at length, "you are not a stranger or one unknown to the friends of the holy church; another in my place would esteem himself only too happy to enjoy the privilege of passing a night where he could breathe the fragrant atmosphere of your virtues. Drink a drop of this elixir; it will secure for you a tranquil and refreshing sleep, after which you will be able to resume your blessed journey with renewed ardor."

The old man swallowed the composing draught and at once his features settled into a sweet and tranquil expression, and he lay like a patriarch in profound slumber. Jacobus contemplated the figure for a long time, and finally spoke: "At early dawn, in a few hours, old man, thou art to depart! Thou wilt set out and drag after thee, in company with thy monks as stupid as thy mules, and surrounded by thy simple band of citizens, that wealth which would surfeit an emperor! And I—only to feast my eyes with it, must, perforce, join thy vagabond crew—may curses!"

"Imbecile!" murmured some one near Jacobus' ears, who did not allow his form to be seen; "Imbecile! of what avail to fly the abbey of Redon, to apostatize at Toledo, to rob Haroun and to murder Saphira! Why pause in the presence of a monk as before an insurmountable obstacle! Thy successors, my worthy Jacobus, will prove less scrupulous, for when they crave the possessions of the church they will begin at once by throttling its priests!"

You might prefer, dear reader, that here, just as Satan—for you have no doubt divined that it was that personage—had whispered his temptation to commit a homicide, I had represented my hero tottering with a

vertigo, bathed in a cold sweat, and regarding with a haggard eye, now the glittering jewels and again the sleeping patriarch; that, at the same instant, the veil of night should be torn asunder by vivid lightning, and that the air should resound with howls and deafening clamor.—I am compelled to state, in order to preserve to the end the character of a faithful historian, that nothing of the kind occurred. A bright ray of sunshine already streamed in through the barred window, and a bird's note had already saluted the rising sun, when, Jacobus, overhearing the movements outside, judged that he had not a moment to lose, if he decided upon yielding to the counsels of the demon.

Man's life hangs by a slender thread. Jacobus pressed his thumb upon Anselm's throat, and in five minutes the cold and impassible eye of the murderer saw that the soul of his aged victim had flown from this earth.

He hastened to read the magic formula. The body of the monk immediately revived on the introduction of Jacobus' soul into it, and it arose on its bed, and the body of Jacobus was transformed into a little cloud, and henceforward it never was remote from the shadow of the false Anselm.

(To be continued.)

HISTORY OF THE EMPIRE OF KIANG.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRESS OF TZE-KIANG—CONTINUED.

I MUST not omit to say a few words concerning a large and respectable sheet called the Pow-wow. Its tendencies are noted by Na-Kin as toward respectability and a goodly outward show of regard for religion and social decorum. The Pow-wow reflected the staid notions of those antiquated citizens who, after an active and eventful life crowned with success, had settled down into a quiet but highly influential state of contentment, enforcing ideas and maxims, which, had they been known to them in youth, would have made them brilliant lights in their respective vocations. At the late day in which these maxims and ideas were used, they only served to envelop the class referred to in a fog of wisdom, through which the facts of life appeared to be unpleasant bug-bears, and to be avoided and removed out of the way as opportunity afforded, or as comfortable habits permitted, or as was politic and effective through a moderate action based upon the support of needy dependents. Amongst those in this class who figured first and foremost was the worthy editor of the Pow-wow. The sensibilities of the Pow-wow were tenderest in respect to infringements on the stated forms of religion, and yet without pretending to be religious and without seriously being so. Conservatism was the motto of that delectable sheet, and its movement was ever in a circle, the centre of which never shifted until

the progress of mankind compelled it by loneliness to advance a few steps. As most of the readers of the *Pow-wow* were in the habit of thinking for themselves, and as no one cared what they thought, the *Pow-wow* cannot be classed among the examples of daily literature which injured society, except in so far as it acted as a break upon progress, and as a leaven to sour all that might otherwise have been conducive to human happiness.

The *Hash-ish* was for many years devoted to publishing odd extracts from other papers for the edification of those who preferred to snooze over imaginary news after dinner rather than to read actual news at or before breakfast. Once upon a time the editor of the *Hash-ish* discovered a new idea, not in his brain, indeed, but floating about among a certain class of the population. It appears that at the time of *Na-Kin* the Empire of *Kiang* was not so densely populated as it is now. Millions of acres of land remained uncultivated, and these were open to a gradual settlement by new immigrants from China proper, who, by their useful labor, both mental and physical, developed the abundant resources of the country, and who gladly exchanged for the associations of their native land, and a career of idleness and oppression this, their new home, with its labors, duties and political privileges. With their useful hands and brains they brought with them, also, habits, thoughts and customs which but poorly harmonized with those of the natives of *Kiang*, whose fathers and grandfathers had, like these new-comers, cast their lot in this new land of promise. It was thought by some near-sighted individuals that these more recent immigrants might be tolerated to advantage without being permitted to participate in the loaves and fishes of the country; it would necessarily make loaves and fishes more abundant for others who were fortunate enough to have been born upon the soil. These and other kindred dogmas the *Hash-ish* took up with an avidity and rancor commensurate with its intelligence and benevolence, and it is impossible to surmise how far the editor of that brilliant sheet would have carried its baneful principles had not its partisans as rapidly abandoned the cause as they had recklessly adopted it.

Of the press of *Tze-Kiang* in general, it may be said that it treated religion with respect, because it was respectable to do so, and political and social questions with rancor and vulgar malice, because it was agreeable to, and satiated the passions, of its subscribers. Subjects that required intelligent appreciation and thoughtful nurture it treated with the ignorance and license of a despot. And prominent among these was the cause of Art. The Press of *Tze-Kiang* admitted Art into its columns, not because of its respect for Art or to show its love for artists, but rather on account of its utter indifference to the latter, and its extreme ignorance of the former, and a predominant desire, above all things,

to flatter subscribers who might happen to become, or perhaps were, the patrons of Art. If *Chow-wang*, a dealer in shingles, who had accumulated a fortune, built a mansion in one of the high streets of *Tze-Kiang*, the *Hing-ho*, the *Ching-ching*, the *Pow-wow* and the *Hash-ish* were all anxious to give an account of it as one of the latest works works of Art, not because the house was really a work of Art or his architect an artist—no, indeed; but because *Chow-wang* subscribed to all these papers, or if not a subscriber, was likely to be one on the morrow when prompted by a pleasing notice of his new mansion. It was probable, too, that he would largely advertise his shingles in all the papers which spoke of his house, and he and his friends would become desirable patrons of newspaper enterprise, and thereby extend the area of freedom and universal enlightenment. It would, indeed, have entailed upon the editor a most undesirable outlay of time and money to have investigated the architectural merits or demerits of the house of *Chow-wang*, or to have engaged the services of a competent critic to write a review of that edifice; all that was useless so long as a few generalities sufficed to please the owner; *Na-Kin* informs us, therefore, that in all the above papers, with but slight variation, the items were furnished to all the journals by one and the same man, who was called a *Chin-go-wam*;* we read, for instance, that *Chow-wang* was a benefactor of society in the shingle line, and that he had finally condescended to enrich the city of *Tze-Kiang* with a monument immortalizing his commercial individuality. He had erected a large mansion in ——— street, at the enormous cost of ———; the said mansion being built in the genuine antediluvian style, toned down with the spirit of *Tyngo-Lyng*. It was, without exception, the handsomest building in the country, and could hardly be equalled by any palaces in China proper in richness and beauty of effect, which palaces it after all excelled in comforts, the true comforts such as were only to be found in the enterprising republic of *Kiang*. The architect was the celebrated *Toto-ass*, who had here added another laurel to the terrible load he was already staggering under, by building palaces for our most discriminating and intelligent amateurs, the merchant princes of *Tze-Kiang*.

Na-Kin here observes that no one need suspect the *Hing-ho*, *Ching-ching* and their contemporaries, of being bribed by the architect of said building into praising a most mediocre and shallow performance, or that they did so in the expectation of a bribe. By no means. Architects, painters and sculptors were parties of whom the daily papers expected nothing, either then or thereafter, and for that very reason they never attempted to criticise their works, nor would they ever condescend to

* This term cannot be translated into English literally, but means a Penny-a-liner.

take the least notice of them, were it not for the fact that this, the above proceeding, was known to be the best means of tickling the vanity of the owners, whose money or influence was wanted.

What they (the daily papers) did expect of the architect of a building which had to be noticed, was that he should prepare a flaming description of the same, in order to spare them the trouble and expense of having it done. The bolder the praise the better they liked it, but woe to the artist who was not hardened enough to blow his own trumpet. Upon him they wreaked their vengeance because he thus deprived them of an opportunity of cheaply gaining a subscriber, and he was at once put down as incapable, or entirely ignored.

It is even so with paintings and sculpture. Some years ago a Chinaman, whose name is so obliterated that I cannot give it you in full—it is something like *Pich-im*, sent a picture to the city of Tze-Kiang to be sold. As the picture was so poor that no one would buy it, in spite of its enormous size, and as it was not worth the freight back again to China proper, the cunning Chinaman presented it to the city of Tze-Kiang, with a view to having himself properly advertised throughout the republic of Kiang. The Py-cho-long of Tze-Kiang and his Council, instead of regarding the offer as an insult, received the picture with thanks, and it is to this day to be seen as a memento of the folly of the age and of its impudence, for it hung among the national and state relics in the great hall of the citizen's temple of the city of Tze-Kiang.

THOUGH the principles of taste be universal, and nearly, if not entirely, the same in all men; yet few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or establish their own sentiment as the standard of beauty. The organs of intellectual sensation are seldom so perfect as to allow the general principles the full play, and produce a feeling correspondent to those principles. They either labor under some defect, or are vitiated by some disorder; and by that means, excite a sentiment which may be pronounced erroneous. When the critic has no delicacy, he judges without any distinction, and is only affected by the grosser and more palpable qualities of the object: the finer touches pass unnoticed and disregarded. Where he is not aided by practice, his verdict is attended with confusion and hesitation. Where no comparison has been employed, the most frivolous beauties, such as rather merit the name of defects, are the object of his admiration. Where he lies under the influence of prejudice, all his natural sentiments are perverted. Where good sense is wanting, he is not qualified to discern the beauties of design and reasoning, which are the highest and most excellent. Under some or other of these imperfections, the generality of men labor; and hence a true judge in the finer arts is observed, even during the most polished ages, to be so rare a character: strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison, and cleared of all prejudice, can alone entitle critics to this valuable character: and the joint verdict of such, wherever they are to be found, is the true standard of taste and beauty.—*Hume*.

TO A BIRD.

EARLIEST warbler of the year,
What a welcome song is thine!
Coming ere the buds appear
On the tree or tangled vine.

Winter scarce has said adieu,
Not a wild flower to be seen
Peeping thro' the frozen dew,
Not a single blade of green.

Yet, the something in thy heart
Tells thee spring will come to bless;
And you straight begin your part,
Piping in the wilderness.

Nought to add, and nought to spare,
Still the self-same song you sing,
Perfect at the first, and now,
Ave! ave to the spring!

Ah! thou art like dawn of day
To the sleepless weary-eyed;
Or like young humility
Springing in the heart of pride.

Or like moonrise on the sea,
That reveals the wished-for shore;
Or like flowers that silently
Bloom o'er those we see no more!

Other birds have finer notes,
But they wait till skies are fair,
Ere they tune their gentle throats;
Thine are heard when earth is bare.

Deeper than my listening ear
Let thy song of hope descend!
May a meaning still more dear
With thy strains of gladness blend!

Hint at something finer still
Than the shadows of the leaves,
Or the lily by the rill,
Ruddy fruit, or yellow sheaves!

That the spring may be to me
Type of the eternal spring;
And while listening to thee,
Learn in darkest day to sing.

B.

PRaise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity. It becomes cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raise expectation, or animate enterprise. It is here not only necessary, that wickedness, even when it is not safe to censure it, be denied applause, but that goodness be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not suffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boast only petty services and easy virtues. . . . The real satisfaction which praise can afford is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by showing us that we have not endeavored to deserve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, satire and reproach.—*Johnson*.